

GUIDE TO HOLINESS.

For the Guide to Holiness.

PLEASING GOD.

NO. 4.

SOCIAL AND PUBLIC WORSHIP.

HAVING considered how we shall please God in the closet, let us turn for a moment to social and public worship.

The great Creator has made us social beings, and he would have us bring the social principle into our religion; thus it will be sanctified. The very element of piety is love — love to God and our fellow-men. Hence it is natural for those who thus love one another, to delight in mingling their devotions. Every Sabbath we go up to the courts of the Lord, and join with the great congregation; during the week we have our little gatherings for prayer, in the vestry, in the social circle, and around the family altar. Many of us engage in these devotional exercises perhaps nearly a thousand times in the course of a year. It is certainly a question of great importance how we shall please God in social worship.

1. Here as in every thing else, the first step towards pleasing him is, *to desire to please him* — making it a distinct and leading object. If we look into our own hearts in respect to this matter, we shall perhaps find a failure here. Is not the idea which usually presents itself when we are going to a religious meeting, that of personal enjoyment and

improvement? Our prayer is that God would give us a good and profitable season — refreshing us by the influences of the Holy Spirit. We want to be enlightened, warmed, animated. A common inquiry is, "Did you have a good meeting?"—meaning, "Did you enjoy it?" Now while personal enjoyment and edification are proper objects of desire, and suitable ends to be aimed at, yet surely the great idea, the leading thought should be, *to worship God*. In these acts, we publicly avouch the Lord Jehovah to be our God, express our sense of dependence on him, adore his perfections, acknowledge his right to rule, and declare to the universe that he is God, and there is none other.

Perhaps the bright angels, our ministering spirits, go with us and join in these services; but it is impossible to imagine them as seeking chiefly their own improvement; no, they are not thinking about themselves at all—the one idea with them is, to worship God, and doubtless their chief desire is, that the service may be pleasing to him. If we attend religious meetings simply with a view to our own edification, we may be said to worship ourselves, rather than our Maker. Our daily prayer is, "Thy will be done on earth as it is done in heaven." Then we desire that God may be worshipped on earth as he is worshipped in heaven. There they forget themselves, and think only of him.

2. Observe the manner in which affectionate children gather around their father. They climb upon his knee, look up into his face, throw their little arms about his neck, and tell him how much they love him. Complaints and requests are forgotten in these demonstrations of affection. No earthly parent ever takes half so much delight in the caresses of his children, as our heavenly Father does in us when with united hearts we exclaim, "O come, let us sing unto the Lord; let us make a joyful noise to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms. Bring an offering, and come into his courts." Is it not a sweet thought, that when the dear children of God thus unite to worship him, they really give him pleasure? "For with such sacrifices he is well pleased."

3. We must sympathize with our fellow-worshippers. We are not now alone with God, and our souls should take a different attitude, from what they do in the closet. Each one is to think and feel for all. There is a community of interest. While we thus unite in prayer and praise, our hearts flow together and are enlarged. The soul lifts up silent ejaculations like these: "Lord give thy dear children here assembled for thy worship, a blessed season—let each one be filled with the

Spirit, and enabled to bring thee an acceptable offering. Look tenderly on them, dear Father, and do for them exceedingly abundantly above all they can ask or think ! ”

4. When we enter the house of prayer, or the little room which for the time being is thus consecrated, let us call in our wandering thoughts. Many a one can say with David, “ O God, my *heart* is fixed,” who is not quite so sure of his *mind*. But where there is a sincere and earnest desire to give our whole attention, we may hope to receive Divine aid. If we are filled with the Spirit, our thoughts will not be apt to wander from heavenly themes, though they may not always follow the speaker. Surely, when we come together expressly for the worship of God, there should be a concentration of all the powers of the soul. It is the greatest thing we ever attempt to do.

Suppose the recording angel should write down the prayer of the individual who leads our devotions, and then interline it with all the idle and irrelevant thoughts which we have allowed to pass through our minds. How strangely the prayer would read ! We should be ashamed to have a document like this sent up to the court of heaven. Can the great Advocate there present such petitions ? Yet no doubt our merciful High Priest over-looks much infirmity of this kind, where he sees an earnest desire to worship him with the whole heart and mind.

5. Posture in prayer. This point, though it may be deemed of little importance, is deserving of attention. It is true God looketh on the heart, yet it may be he observes also the position of the body. It is the greatest proof of affection for an earthly friend, when we are careful to please in little things. The practice of sitting in prayer, which within a few years has obtained in some churches, seems unsuitable, irreverent, unscriptural, and is contrary, I believe, to the usage of the Christian church in every age and nation. Probably the feelings of most Christians incline them to kneel in their private devotions ; why then, should they be disposed to sit in public ? It would strike us as very strange and improper for the one who leads in prayer to remain sitting ; then why should those who join with him ? Is there not something in our hearts which tells us it would be pleasing to God that we should stand or kneel before the throne of grace ? We read in scripture of standing, kneeling, and prostration, but never of sitting. “ O come let us worship and bow down ; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker.”

6. When we engage in public or social worship, let us sympathize with the preacher or leader of the meeting. While we listen, instead of criticising, let us be praying for him. It would strengthen a preacher,

it would make him eloquent, it would give him power, if he had reason to believe, that nobody was criticising, but all were praying for him. We should not expect too much of the speaker. We must not require him to *carry* us — he is only to *lead* us. We must not calculate on having our hearts warmed by the fervor of his eloquence, or by his loud and impassioned tones. No, let us look into the glorious truths and promises of God's word, really believing and appropriating them; then our hearts will not fail to be warm. This suggests the remark, that we should not leave our religious teachers to do all the studying and thinking. We must investigate the truths, examine the duties, explore the promises, and apply the great principles of the gospel, for ourselves — no one can do it for us. It is marvellous how ignorant a person will remain on these points, who is always hearing, but never studying. If we would please God in our manner of listening to sermons, we must not only be attentive and prayerful at the time, but afterwards examine the subject for ourselves. Truth does not become ours till we comprehend it, affectionately receive it, and faithfully act upon it.

7. Those who preach, and those who lead in prayer, or singing, should remember, that they cannot please God while they are intent on pleasing men. It has been suggested, that perhaps the good angels attend us in our public devotions. We may not be sure of this, but we are sure of the presence of a bad angel; that great enemy "who goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," always follows us into the church and the conference room. He tempts the audience to think of the speaker, and the speaker to think of the audience, that all may lose sight of Him whom they have come to worship. With what feelings must the great Searcher of hearts look upon a congregation, assembled professedly to worship him, where the speaker is only trying to be eloquent, and the singers are only trying to be musical, and the people are trying to keep awake!

8. I would venture to suggest, that *confessions*, as a general thing, are not so appropriate in public prayer, as they are in the closet. It is common for those who lead our devotions, to make from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from meeting to meeting, such wholesale confessions of sins, as cannot apply to all, and ought not to apply to any. The effect is bad. The impenitent say within themselves, "These Christians are not sincere in their acknowledgements of guilt; if they were, they would break off their sins, and not have the same confessions to make over again at every meeting."

The young convert, whose heart is warm with its first love, finds

something chilling and depressing in these complaints. He had much rather be singing, "Unto Him who hath washed us"—and it is much better he should.

There is a large class of professors of religion, on whom the effect is injurious. They are prone to "measure themselves by themselves, and compare themselves among themselves." They do not say it in so many words, but they have a feeling, that so long as they are not worse than many others in the church, they are not very bad. These persons have their consciences quieted in regard to their conformity to the world, neglect of duty, and indulgence of wrong feelings, by hearing such sins continually confessed in public and social worship. They suppose the speaker includes himself and all other saints, in his sweeping assertions of universal disobedience, and comfort themselves with the thought, that if they are not what they should be, they are at least, doing as well as the rest.

There is in every church perhaps a class of humble, conscientious Christians, who are truly hungry and thirsting after righteousness. As they read the promises, and dwell on the riches of grace in Christ Jesus, their faith grows strong, and they mount up on wings as eagles. They believe that "through God they shall do valiantly"—they can "run through a troop and leap over a wall." But when they hear from their religious teachers, these confessions of perpetual disobedience in thought, word, and deed, they are perplexed, their faith is crippled, and the conviction that sin is something inevitable, fastens upon them, and clips their wings. Now it cannot be pleasing to God, that we should thus embolden the false professor, and dishearten the true Christian. S. J.

For the Guide to Holiness.

THE TWO WITNESSES.

"The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God."

BROTHER KING:—At some periods in my religious experience, it has been difficult for me to distinguish between the witness of the Holy Spirit, and the witness of my own spirit. This perplexity has arisen from the fact that both witnesses speak through the *consciousness*; and how one witness represented the same fact as the other, through the same unmistakable speaker, and yet differently from the other, I could not see.

But seeing that both witnesses are spoken of in the holy Scriptures, the one distinguished from the other — the divine Spirit, witnessing *with* the human spirit, — I have desired to have the distinction clear in my own mind. Whatever relates to the knowledge which the soul may have of its own state before God, has much practical importance in it. Mr. Wesley gives us to understand that our own spirit in the case, is the *conscience*. The conscience, then, must have some ground to act upon ; it must have a standard by which to judge, — one which, being measured by, we are acquitted or condemned. The bible gives the standard for the Christian's conscience to measure by. The life of Jesus Christ, so far as his human nature alone is seen, and the character of perfect Christians, as given there, together with the commands and assurances which we have in this holy book, furnish a standard by which those of us who see it to be our privilege to be dead to sin, find our consciences to be judging us. We might better say, perhaps, that in the absolute sense, the commands give the standard, and the promises, with the example of those who lived by faith in them, are explanations and encouragements. Now our conscience judges us at all times, under the varying circumstances which human life brings along with it from day to day, by the standard by which we see ourselves called to be judged ; and it is always handing over its testimonies to our consciousness, to witness for us or against us. If under provocation, I return evil for evil, the witness is against me ; but if by the grace given me, I overcome evil with good, I have the witness of my own spirit that I am approved by Him who has set the standard for me, and has given me light to see it. Again, if I am in trying circumstances, under the temptation to impatience, and the temptation finds no answer in my heart, the conscience sends up its testimony, and the consciousness is meanwhile recording it, and thus I have the witness of my own spirit again, that I am approved. And so of the days and weeks as they pass, which are filled up with circumstances that call us out, and lead us to exhibit to ourselves, at least, what we are. If our consciousness, having been constantly taking the testimonies of our conscience, has nothing to speak against us, and thus shows that we stand approved, we have what the holy bible calls the witness of our own spirit, that our ways please God. "And hereby we *do know* that we know Him, *if we keep his commandments*." 1st John, 2 : 3.

If in the given case, I feel *in my heart* like returning evil for evil, or *feel* impatience when tempted to it, though I make no outward expression of it, the witness of my own spirit is against me ; supposing myself, as

I do, to have received the light which holds me to be judged by the standard of the pure *in heart*. To be sure there is but one standard by which all are to be judged ultimately; when each will be called to answer not only for the light that was really given, but for what would have been given in future, had the present gifts been improved. But the conscience judges by only that light, which in her time of judging, fills the compass of her vision, and as the mind in its onward progress in spiritual knowledge, gives the conscience enlargement to the circle of her vision, we call these successive degrees of light, which she receives, for the sake of convenience, so many graduating standards for the conscience to judge by. Happy are we, who having improved the light of conviction, have received the light of the new birth, together with forgiveness for all past neglect; and having improved this also, have got hold of the great idea of perfect faith and perfect love.

I sometimes hear those who profess sanctification, speak doubtfully, when asked if they are yet standing in that holy state. They say — “I don’t know how to answer; I have not the witness of *the Spirit* to it.” I would inquire of such, if they could not know what was their state, by the witness of *their own spirits*, during this time when the Divine witness is withheld.

If one gets angry, he knows it; he could say, I am conscious of having the feeling of anger, just as soon as the feeling comes into existence in the mind. If he feels pride — a desire of self-exhibition — he knows it. If he feels self-will, or any feeling growing out of it, he knows it; he cannot help knowing it, for that speaker in the soul which says *I know*, is never asleep — is never indolent; this consciousness, which first tells us what we feel, and then, in the same moment, tells us what the testimony of our conscience is concerning that feeling, gives us to know whether we violate the law of love or not.

I know that persons may have a hastiness of spirit which will cause them to hurry by these inward testimonies, in their outward pursuits; so that they will say, “I hardly know what my state is.” But the clear-eyed conscience will take them back there, and condemn them for yielding to the temptation to this haste, which outward things are always presenting to us. They are under condemnation for this very not knowing. Their sin began when they began to have this indistinct view of things; for this darkened state of the mind pre-supposes and includes unbelief, so that in this case they may know that the testimony of their own spirit is against them.

Well then, if we may have the testimony of our own spirits in these particular instances, we may in the same way know whether we are

uniformly in the right state of heart or not ; we may judge ourselves by the fruit that our hearts spontaneously bear.

But it will be asked, how we shall get the testimony of our own spirit in the first place ; before we have had *time* to judge by what we show ourselves to be in the lapse of time, and under different circumstances. I would answer, that we may know in the first instance by seeing what we *do* in the first instance.

If, when we come to God with our whole heart, as well as we know how, offering him that very heart that he has called for, we believe that he takes it just *as* we bring it, and *just while we are bringing* it, we do what the bible, in all its commands and promises, makes it plain we should do ; we credit the promises of the eternal God, and make him appear a reasonable being in the sight of the other subjects of his government, who are beholding us. But if we refuse to do so, we refuse to give the God that made us, our confidence ; we refuse to trust *wholly* in the merit of Jesus Christ, by looking after some merit in ourselves — hesitating to believe God receives us, because we see such unfitness in ourselves. So in the very first instance we know which we do ; and we know when we can say that our conscience approves us. When we come to the Purifier of hearts, with not only our purposes, — determining to lay aside every thing that he disapproves, but with our confidence too, believing that he embraces us closely in his holy arms the moment we throw ourselves into them — we have the witness of our own spirit that we have done our part ; we are conscious that we have given all, and that we have faith in God that his own covenant has made it sure that he takes all — the whole heart — the whole being.

The consciousness is an *authoritative* ground of belief ; this being so, we have ground to *know* that we have believed in God, without reserving place for a single fear, when we *have* done so. This then is the first step in the way of perfect faith, (faith for a perfect cure) and perfect love immediately follows ; for perfect confidence cannot long exist without perfect love. And it is this faith, and this love, which regulates the heart, and while existing, keeps it in that state where it brings forth easily and naturally, all the fruits of “perfect love.”

The very heart witnesses for itself through its own appropriate speaker. “He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the witness in himself.” And though this witness cannot be got — though the soul cannot get into the state where she can have the witness in herself — without the Divine Spirit to strengthen her weakness in every step, yet we think that this witness, in itself considered, is distinct from the witness of *the Holy Ghost*, and should be so understood. But what is the witness

of the Holy Ghost? — The speaking of God through the consciousness, (for it comes through none of the outward senses) testifying that we are approved by himself, without carrying the mind through any process of comparison — without referring it to any times, places or circumstances; — the testimony of Him who searches the heart, in his own hand-writing there.

And here, I think I can see the difference between the witness of *the* Spirit, and the witness of our own spirit. To get the witness of our own spirit, the mind has to examine its own operations. It takes its data from time, place and circumstance; and under powerful temptation, it has to do this with great care, in order to withstand Satan, when he disputes the testimony of our own spirit. God shows us in this, as much as in any other way, that what he knows, he knows without any process of investigation like ours; and as he knows the mind, so he speaks to the mind. If we should be asked, when enjoying the witness of the Holy Spirit to our sanctification, *how* we know we are in this state, we should find that we had not been thinking of our *reasons* for believing that our hearts were right, since God himself had been witnessing for us; we have been believing the fact, without having an exhibition of the evidence of it.

Nevertheless, the evidences of it are at hand, to be resorted to at any moment; for the Holy Ghost never gives his witness, of course, until we have the witness of our own spirit; and the witness of our own spirit is made up of reasons. And I believe that those who keep the witness of their own spirit clear, do almost always have the witness of the Divine Spirit *with* their spirit. The Word of God seems to take this for granted. Here sits holy love in the centre of the soul, and by her undisturbed attraction all the movements of that soul are regulated, and her satisfying voice is answering — it is right — all is right. But when holy love suspends her witness for the exercise of our faith, or for the strengthening of some of the other faculties, it is then we must believe the testimony of our own spirit, meanwhile *getting* the testimony of our own spirit, by believing on the Son of God with the whole heart — though it be doing it in no light but the light of the promises. In so doing, we retain our power to walk uprightly before our God, and as soon as the eye of love sees that we are sufficiently exercised in this absolute kind of faith; her voice in the soul is again heard. The soul that retains its own witness clearly, in the time when the divine witness is withheld, will have an unbroken tendency to listen every moment for the voice of her beloved, until it is heard again.

A STUDENT.

September, 1849.

For the Guide to Holiness.

THE TRUE REST.

'T is not in vain the mind,
By many a tempest driven,
Shall seek a resting-place to find,
A calm like that of heaven.

The weak one and dismayed,
Scarce knowing where to flee,
How happy, when he finds the aid,
That comes alone from Thee.

In Thee, O God, is REST;—
Rest from the world's desires,
From pride that agitates the breast,
From passion's angry fires.

In Thee is rest from fear,
That brings its strange alarm,
And sorrow, with its rising tear,
Thou hast the power to calm.

U.

For the Guide to Holiness.

KNOWLEDGE IS POWER.

THIS is true, in whatever sense we may consider it, but more especially in a scriptural and spiritual sense. The science of human wisdom has wrought wonders in every department of man's social and moral existence. This science has not been attained but by a close and self-denying use of appropriate means. Years are devoted to acquisition of knowledge in the theory, and years more in its practical application. By this process, the poor and the ignorant have in many instances arisen to the highest eminence of honor and usefulness. In no case has a diligent and practical acquisition of useful knowledge passed away unrewarded. God has ordained, both in the natural and spiritual world, that the hand of the diligent should "make rich," should "bear rule," that his soul should "be made fat," that his substance should be "precious," and that his thoughts

should "tend only to righteousness." Blessed reward! Blessed encouragement to labor for that which is good!

And now, what we want on the present occasion, is to suggest to Christians, the importance of a close and self-denying resort to all appropriate means, for the acquisition of scriptural and spiritual knowledge on the subject of holiness. Such knowledge is necessary, yea, essential; it is attainable; and such knowledge is power, in a sense far exceeding the ability of human language to describe. The want of this knowledge in the theory, often proves a barrier to that deep experience which sincere panters after holiness might otherwise enjoy. We want scripture views of the doctrine, together with a scriptural experience, and a scriptural practice. Individuals possessing this, have a key to all the treasures and glories of the heavenly world; they become partakers of the divine nature, and know what it is to be "changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

God commands us to "learn to do well," to "grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ," to "follow on to know the Lord," and to "comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ which passeth (human) knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God." These commands are obligatory upon all men, but more especially upon Christians. To neglect or disobey them, is to incur darkness and guilt.

Dear reader, art thou resting in present attainment, either in knowledge or experience? If so, thou art doing despite to the command and to the Spirit of that God who requires thee to "GO FORWARD." Be resolved to do so no longer. As we have suggested above, use the appropriate means to get knowledge, experience and strength, that you may not only be more happy — more holy — but that you may more successfully fight the battles of the Lord, and win many souls to Christ. A brother somewhat prominent for a constant devotion to the cause of holiness, remarked in the hearing of the writer not long since, that he had to use means to keep up a lively interest in his own soul on this hallowed theme. This is the concurrent testimony of all who are living and thinking witnesses to the blessing of entire sanctification.

We might refer to some of the means necessary to promote this

growth in knowledge of holy things, but shall leave them for the consideration of our readers. We hope each will add to his faith knowledge, even that knowledge which shall enable him to be a workman, successful in his calling, and one whom Christ shall not be ashamed to own, before men and angels, and finally to shine amid the constellations of the heavenly world.

B. S.

For the Guide to Holiness.

THOUGHTS ON THE REST OR PEACE OF THE HOLY SOUL.

No. 1.

THE HOLY SOUL RESTS FROM REASONINGS.

WHEN the soul, by the renovation of the life of faith at its centre, has become fully united with God, it experiences a rest, a calm and triumphant peace, which is a foretaste of the heavenly world. I propose to illustrate the nature of this divine peace or rest in a number of particulars.

Among other things which will be mentioned in their order, the holy soul *rests from reasonings*.

2. The reverse of this proposition is true in regard to those who are not holy. It is not natural to the soul, so long as it remains in a state of alienation from God, to suppress reasonings. God is not more the centre of the life of the soul, than he is the centre of all truth. When God is displaced from his centre in the soul, the relations of truth are unsettled. It is then, that man, cast as it were on an ocean without soundings and without shore, knows not where he is, nor what he is. He resorts to reasoning, therefore, from the necessity of his position. So great are his perplexities, that he is obliged to reason. He doubts, he inquires, he compares, he draws conclusions, he pronounces judgment. His whole mental nature is in action; without its being the action of rest, the quiet movement of the Divine order. Perhaps it is well that it should be so, until, by making inquiries without results, and without finding the true rest of the spirit, he feels the necessity of turning to God in humility, who is the only source of truth for the understanding, and of pacification for the heart.

3. It is different with the truly holy soul. It is a remark often made by spiritual writers, a remark which is founded in all correct views of

God's inward dealings, that the holy soul rests from reasonings. In order to understand this proposition, however, it is proper to say something in explanation of the terms used in it. The term *REST* is *relative*. It has relation to and implies the existence of the opposite, namely, *unquietness* or *unrest*. The term *REASONING*, is the name of that important intellectual power, which compares and combines truth, in order to discover new truth. Under a divine direction, this power is susceptible of useful applications and results. It is then entirely calm in its action, and is consistent with the highest peace and joy of the spirit. To rest from such reasonings, from reasonings which do not disturb rest, would be an absurdity. When, therefore, the remark is made in spiritual writers, that the truly renewed soul has rest from reasonings, the meaning is, that it has rest from *unquiet*, *agitating*, and *perplexing* reasonings; from reasonings which are not from God. It is certainly a great religious grace, to be free from such reasonings.

4. He who has no rest, except what he can find in reasonings, never can enjoy the true rest, because reasoning never can give it. It is not an instrument adequate to such a result. There are some mysteries in the universe, which reasoning has not power to solve. To a created mind, for instance, a mind which is uncreated must always be a mystery. From the nature of the case, God is a mystery to the human mind, because, being uncreated, he is, and always must be, incomprehensible. Incomprehensible in his nature, he is incomprehensible also in many of his creative and administrative acts. The apostle, in speaking of the depths of God's wisdom, exclaims, "How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"—Rom. 11, 33. Well may those judgments be called unsearchable, and those ways past finding out, which pertain to the Infinite. It is obviously impossible that the finite should fully explore them.

5. As, therefore, there is a multitude of things which reasoning cannot resolve; all attempts to satisfy ourselves on such subjects, must be attended with disquiet and anxiety. The true wisdom is, to wish to know all that God would have us to know; to employ our perception and reasoning under a divine guidance, and to seek nothing beyond that limit. All beyond that we may properly and safely leave, knowing that all things work together for the good of those who love God.

We may illustrate our position perhaps, by saying that we are a people on a voyage. Providence is the vessel, if we may so speak, in which we are embarked, and in which we are borne on over the vicissitudes of our allotment, over the waves of changing time. The vessel in a

world like this, where good and evil are conflicting, may be tossed with violence ; but the mariners should be calm. Let the vessel float on. The winds and the currents are *not accidents* ; but every movement of them, every rolling wave, every breath of wind, is under a divine control. The pilot is awake when he seems to sleep. The rest of God is not the rest of weakness or of forgetfulness, but the rest of security. And his work is not the less effectual and the less certain, because it is done "without observation." It is our business, when we have done all that he has commanded us, to leave the result with him, without fear and without questions.

The vessel which bore the Saviour over the sea of Tiberias, was tossed by the storm. His disciples came to him in great agitation, and called upon him for help. In quieting the raging of the tempest, he thought it a suitable occasion to rebuke them for giving themselves up so easily to the reasonings and fears of unbelieving nature. "And he saith unto them, why are ye fearful, *oh ye of little faith!* Then he arose and rebuked the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm. But the men marvelled, saying, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him."

6. At the present time, and for some years past, there have been great changes and perplexities in nations. All the positions of society have been reversed ; problems have been started which affect the basis of civilization ; governments have been overturned ; the low have been elevated to places of power ; and the great have been driven into exile or cast into dungeons. The man of the world reasons ; politicians gather up the letters of history and try to spell something, which will disclose the mysteries of the future. But God keeps his own counsels. The wheels of his vast government move on. But he who trusts in God, is not troubled. His belief in the Creator harmonizes and triumphs over the confusions of the creature. And faith is calm, where reason is confounded.

7. Having exercised your reason, till you find there is no peace in it, rest at last in the God of reason. Link the weakness of finite wisdom to the strength of Infinite wisdom. What thou knowest not, *believe that God knows*. Blindfolded to the future, nevertheless walk on, with God's hand to guide thee. And thus accept the fulness and strength of Infinite wisdom, which is pledged to all those who have faith, as a compensation for the deficiencies and weakness of their own. God will work out problems for the humility of faith, which he hides from the confidence of unsanctified deduction, and thus the truly humble and devout

Christian, who knows nothing but his Bible, will have more true peace of spirit, than the unbelieving philosopher.

L. M.

For the Guide to Holiness.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCE.

BROTHER KING:—As the pages of your “Guide” are sacredly consecrated to *experience*, rather than *theory*—if the following humble testimony, in honor of that grace that purifies the heart, may be deemed worthy to afford encouragement to one soul that is athirst for purity, you are at liberty to give it to your readers.

On the earliest page of memory, I find records made of visitations from the Holy Spirit. I read no line there, however, that tells of a devoted mother leading her child to the place of secret prayer, and with prostrate form—uplifted hands—and streaming eyes, imploring the divine benediction upon her; I love to dwell upon a scene like this, when I find it in another's history; it gives rise to emotions of admiration that are indescribable. But such a picture does not grace the humble story of the writer. I never was familiar with the smile of a pious mother. Before I had become *conscious* of her tenderness, she bade me farewell. They tell me that at the calm twilight hour, one day in June, a bird came in at her window, and rested on the bed-side. She said it was a *spirit* come for her, to escort her to a brighter world. It lingered a little while, and when it flew away, she slept in death. My father's profession called him incessantly from home; but when there, he never took me upon his knee, to tell me about the Saviour of sinners; his own heart was a stranger to things of a spiritual nature. I never was an inmate of a Sabbath School—that happy gate which opens into Christ's visible church. My footsteps were never trained to tread “the sanctuary of the Most High;” and the sound of the gospel trumpet was too distant to fall upon my ear.

My home was a retired farm-house, hidden almost in the seclusion of surrounding woods. It was here I passed away the hours of childhood,—a stranger to the world beside. No one ever thought of coming to *our* abode, to bring the glad tidings of salvation.

I go back to these scenes, in order to show the marvellous leadings of the Holy Spirit, which thus, unaided by any human instrumentality, in the very dawn of childhood, made me to feel the necessity of a regen-

erated nature. By its hallowed beams, gilding the darkness of my understanding, sin was made to appear in its real character; which made me long for a deliverance from it. For months together, my days would be passed in sinning and repenting, alternately. Sometimes my convictions would be so keen that I would steal away to some lone spot — the thickest part of a wood — where I would vent my tears and cries, until the anguish of my heart would in some degree subside. But I was a stranger to the mystery of “*faith* in our Lord Jesus Christ.” Consequently, I wandered to and fro in my “wilderness state.” But it pleased God to let a brighter day dawn. A change came over my father’s house. I was allowed to go to a Methodist prayer-meeting. I knelt when the worshippers did, and prayed for mercy — arose when they arose, and took my seat. Some one overheard me praying, I suppose, and whispered, “Believe! and praise God for salvation!” It was enough: in a moment, my chains fell off. My soul mounted as in a fiery chariot. I seemed to see the Saviour, surrounded by a host of glorified spirits — and he looked on me, and smiled. From this period, I was literally the subject of another state of existence. The word of God was the companion of my wakeful hours, and its inspiring truths gave character to the visions of the night. I had many sore conflicts with the powers of darkness, but they were invariably followed by unspeakable triumphs of soul, and increased confidence in a delivering Saviour. All fear of death and judgment was removed: yea, they became themes of richest thoughts. In a word, I seemed daily, to *walk with God*.

No one, that I remember, ever talked to me of *holiness of heart*, but I clearly saw that I must love God with my whole soul, as the only possible qualification for living with Him forever. But I hasten to a sad reverse of experience. After two years, another change transpired beneath the paternal roof. I was no longer allowed to go to the house of God. After months of sorrow on account of it, I began to yield my confidence — listened to the entreaties of a mandate voice that was both loved and feared — and requested the removal of my name from the church. I felt it to be a fearful expedient, but it was not wholly a voluntary act. I reserved a serious intention, when circumstances would admit, to unite with the people of God again. But I allowed myself to become discouraged — and the comforts of grace faded away into a shadow. At length I left home, to engage in an important avocation; my resolution came back to my mind, but alas! the balance of religious character was gone — and I felt no disposition to resort to a mere pro-

fession. I was unhappy; I tried the world as an antidote. I was pleased with its charms, though I could not make myself a stranger to the truth that they lured to death. I listened eagerly to the strain of the syren; but I could not close my ear to the stern admonition: "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth!" I never entered a gay circle but with faltering steps; I never returned from one, but with a heart whose vacant recesses echoed dolefully to the conclusion of the wise man's researches: "Vanity of vanities and vexation of spirit!" I trembled to forget, and yet I was wretched while I remembered the past. Oh! the forbearance of Infinite mercy, that would not —

"— let the lifted thunder drop "

upon a rebellious subject! After a lapse of many months, I was constrained, through the interposition of an overruling Providence, by placing me in the way of religious influence, to reach after the lost pleasures of religion. But I did not at once unloose my hold upon the world; I aimed at a *medium*. I tore my heart from some of its idols,—formed religious habits and associations, to some extent,—cultivated an interest in the institutions of Christianity,—particularly the cause of Foreign Missions,—studied, fasted and prayed, but was not re-instated to my former peace. A crisis occurred, that most clearly showed me the ground I occupied. I was thrown in the way of worldly society, and solicited to partake of poisonous joys — which, though unsought, I found I had not sufficient courage to resist. I entered tremblingly the gilded snare, and was well nigh fatally enclosed. At an interval, I sought my closet, and prostrated myself before the Lord. The Holy Spirit seemed about taking its flight. Never was a soul nearer being lost! Oh the recollection of this period! I involuntarily pause to repeat new strains of praise to an *omnipotent* Saviour's grace, while I fancy I hear the celestial chorus in commemoration of it, that breaks from the harps of happy spirits above, of whom it is said, "which things" they "desire to look into!" But I proceed:—The gentle Dove forbore his flight, and sealed the solemn vow, to "renounce the world" and seek my only joy in Christ for ever. Two weeks, I think, precisely, from this evening, found me a humble — or at least a *weeping* — penitent, at the lowly spot where I first found a sin-pardoning God. The fourth evening I approached the altar. I was again made to rejoice in justifying grace. My soul was very happy — but in *that very hour* I saw,—I *felt*, that *pardon* was not *purity*. I panted for the full image. I eagerly read every work I could find, on the doctrine of Christian holiness. Five

months passed — but my researches in *theory* had yet failed in introducing me to the *experience* of “a heart in every thought renewed.”

Oh, how I longed to converse with some one who could assure me they *felt* the sanctifying influence of the all-cleansing blood! A sister handed me the memoir of Mrs. Rogers. The *simplicity* of the way by which she was brought to render the entire sacrifice, gave courage to my longing heart. At once I resolved to seek full salvation as a *present blessing*. A week rolled by, while I was trying to learn the hard lesson of receiving “by *faith*” — and receiving “*now*.” I became a mystery to myself. The adversary made his last grand efforts. Wherever I went to pray, the suggestion arose, “Not here! not now!” But *conscious need* impelled me on. Sometimes I wept profusely; sometimes I prayed agonizingly, and seemed near the blessing; and again I could scarcely weep or pray at all.

On the evening of the 11th of February, 1846, I retired to my chamber, bearing the memoir alluded to, and the Holy Bible in my hands. I opened the former, when it seemed whispered — “Why not seek direction in the Word of Truth, *alone*?” I closed the book, and opened the sacred volume: my eyes fell upon the passage, “Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, &c.” I listened, as to a voice directly from heaven. The invitation looked as broad as the universe, and as free as the vital air. I extinguished the light, laid my hand upon the promise, and knelt before the Lord, solemnly resolving to plead, should it be practicable, until the break of day.

At once I was imbued with the spirit of wrestling Jacob. I plead upon the ground of the invitation and the promise. Ah, how truly I felt that I came “without money and without price!” Hours fled away, while I seemed to talk face to face with God. I was soon *wholly consecrated*, and rather than give up the struggle, I believe I would have fallen a martyr on the spot. Yet I could not appropriate the purifying merits. I asked why I should be brought into such communion with the Invisible, and still be unblest. I was assured I had not yet *believed*! I inquired, “What, Lord! must I *believe* so great a thing as my heart *made pure* without an *evidence first*?” “Presumption in the first degree!” interrupted the grand enemy. “Faith is the *evidence* of things *not seen*!” said the Word of God. I caught the immutable declaration, and in a moment ventured my *all* upon its authority. I threw every power of my soul into *the act of believing*. There was no *fanaticism* resorted to, but the utmost *simplicity*. I said, “Lord, I believe, if I were *this moment* ushered into thy presence, I should stand, washed from every

stain in the Redeemer's blood, *spotless* before thy throne!" A *moment* had not fled, before the place seemed filled with the very atmosphere of heaven. In breathless rapture, I *listened* to the *echo* my soul sent back to the tidings of angelic spirits in the heavenly world:—"A worm of earth is sanctified to God!" A *whisper* would have been too boisterous to have mingled with the holy stillness of the scene.

When I opened the Bible for the first time after I entered into such solemn relations to God, I had a single, undivided purpose: it was to *learn the Divine will*. With the same simple, perfect confidence that would characterize momentary suspense for the answer of a friend, I turned over the hallowed pages—when my attention was arrested by the sixth chapter of Romans. I learned I must "*reckon*" myself "to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ." From that hour, for more than three years, I have leaned upon Jesus, as a *full Redeemer*. I have been assailed in many instances, by the very powers of darkness; but through Christ, have been more than conqueror in them all. Storms and angry waves of tribulation have dashed *around* my soul; but the Omnipotent arm has stayed them from breaking *in* to inundate my peace! *Christ* is the *centre* to which my being tends. I am learning there are *degrees* of sanctifying grace. I have proved *some* of them—but, while conscious they have only been the *introductory* ones, I am not disheartened. *Perfection* has ever been the work at which my immortal powers have aspired;—to the Triune God, be all the praise, that I have found the *pathway* to it! I am a *sinner saved* through Christ! Oh that every believer were a witness to sanctifying grace! Oh that the church were a flame of *perfect love*! LOUISA.

NEW JERSEY, 1849.

For the Guide to Holiness.

JOURNEYINGS TO MOUNT ZION.

No. IV.

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE.

August 24.—Let us turn over and read the inspiring pages of the biographies of departed saints. How sacred are their memories and how sweet their experiences! What a shining path they trod, and what beacons through a wilderness to after-coming pilgrims! O, how many Israelites indeed can we point out, who fought manfully the good

fight of faith, who contended earnestly for the victory, and now that they have overcome through the blood of the Lamb, they mingle among the harpers of glory, and sweep the holy lyres of heaven.

“Worthy the Lamb, they cry,
To be exalted thus!”

These have passed before us in the Christian race to our Father’s house above. But they have left us their example. “Being dead they yet speak.” And the lesson we learn from their journeyings, contrasted with our own, is that the Christian experience is about the same with each individual pilgrim to Mount Zion — the same in all respects, the same in all ages. There may, it is true, be some little dissimilarity of circumstance, but a great unity and oneness as to the trials, comforts, temptations, deliverances by the way, and the final conquest in the end. The experience of one corresponds with another even minutely, and the general experience of each and all, is remarkably similar. We have been impressed with this “painfully-pleasing” fact, in hearing our class relate their Christian experience this morning. God so orders it — be it so, Amen!

“Before our Father’s throne, we pour our ardent prayers,
Our hopes, our fears, our joys are one, our comfort and our cares :
We share our mutual woes, our mutual burthens bear,
And often for each other flows, the sympathizing tear.”

But how different will it be when we all arrive at home. How infinitely more blessed, when we have entered our Father’s house in the skies, and occupied our mansions prepared for us! Here our tears are mingled with our joys, our sorrows and trials with our pleasures and comforts. Here, at best, it is but a mixed cup: but we may resignedly drink it for our Father’s hand administered it. Yet we may look forward with transporting joy and increasing delight, to that better and to that happy country, where,

“From sorrow, toil and pain, and sin we shall be free;
And perfect love and friendship reign, to all eternity.”

THE WAY OF HOLINESS.

There are seasons, when Christ deigns to feast with his saints upon joys well refined, and causes us with joy to draw water from the wells of salvation. And, again, there are seasons, when we greatly “hunger and thirst after righteousness.” Just at this time I feel my need of the waters of life to refresh my weary soul, and the consolations of his grace to revive me by the way. We are passing through an enemy’s land, and

must needs fight our passage quite through to the promised land. We must expect seasons of clouds, as well as sunshine. Clouds may intervene between God and our soul, yet they may not between him and our faith. My trust at this hour is unshaken in the living God. I feel I have not lost any thing whereunto I have attained. Thanks be unto God !

When I look back upon the days of my boyhood, when first I met the children of God in the class-room, and then look at my present state of grace, O, how I am astonished, how enraptured at the amazing mercy of God ! “O come and let us magnify his grace together.” That early season of my life was a season of small things — “weak and feeble was the day” — but that I now should have to teach and speak to fathers and mothers in Israel, in the class-room, of “the deep things of God,” of his sanctifying grace to me, instead of looking naturally up to them as pillars in the church of God, knowing all the will of their heavenly Master, “even their sanctification,” and leading in the highway of holiness, and instructing the younger, “as babes in Christ,” is a matter to me of profound wonder and astonishment ! *I speak in great humility*, and while we speak of these things, we speak not to condemn or reproach any, but that speaking of God’s goodness, we might magnify his name, and place some incentive before believers, that they may “perfect holiness in the fear of God.” The Lord make me exemplary, holy and useful. Though first of all the class to acknowledge the higher and deeper joys of a life of holiness, may I not be the only one to feel and know and acknowledge Him “who cleanseth us from all unrighteousness.” Though I have been led in a strange way — in a way I knew not — in a way peculiarly strait and plain ; yet I will say it has been a pleasant way — a safe way — a way of great delight, for it has been in “the way of holiness.” Thanks to God for this *better* way !

THE FULNESS OF GOD.

September 3. — How many believing Christians rest short of that fulness ! Yet they hunger and thirst after righteousness, while they are not looking for, nor particularly desiring to be filled. Says the Saviour — “Ask largely, that your joy may be full.” O that we may be enabled to comprehend with all saints, the height and depth, and breadth and length of the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord, and that we may possess that peace which passeth all understanding, “that we may be filled with the fulness of God.”

We see no good reason why Christians may not enjoy much as well

as little — why they may not enjoy *all* that God wills they should, as that they should enjoy any — that they should drink from the fountain as well as from the stream which flows from that fountain. Christ is the fountain of all blessedness, and if we abide in him and he in us, he “shall be in us a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

“In Christ, all truth and grace reside,
His goodness is a flowing tide.”

“To me the well of life Thou art,
Of joy the swelling flood;
Wafted by Thee my willing heart,
Returns to God!”

TRUST IN GOD.

September 7.—I can truly say this morning, though the mountains be cast into the midst of the sea and the waves roar with the swelling thereof; yea more — should the earth be burned up, and the heavens pass away, so that there should be no place found for them, yet can I trust a faithful Lord, and triumph in the God of my salvation! I feel assured that God is mine and I am his; and while I praise him for all that is past, I will trust him for all that is to come. God is faithful, and in no wise slack in his promises; therefore, the children of men should trust in him evermore. Our feet shall not slide but stand in an even place, so long as we rely on God and make the Lord, our confidence. His grace is sufficient to keep us. “They that trust in the Lord shall be made like Mount Zion, which abideth for ever.” Blessed are those whose faith hath saved them thus far: more blessed still those who are faithful to the end. Thy promises, O Lord, are very faithfulness, and especially to them who run the way of thy commandments: they will thus abide for ever.

“Faithful, O Lord, thy promises are,
A rock that cannot move—
A thousand promises, declare
Thy constancy of love.”

RELIGION REMAINS FOR EVER.

September 14.—Through grace in Christ Jesus, I have been made a new creature. How precious is this grace! Religion opens to the prospect of the believer, boundless pleasures and rivers of delight. O, what an exhaustless treasure! I am glad to-day that I see and feel as I do. Once I saw through a glass darkly — now I behold Christ in his Providence, in his grace, in his ordinances, without doubting, and without a veil. My faith no longer sees “men as trees walking,” but I now

behold the things of the Spirit plainly. The Lord, in his goodness, has early permitted me to see the fallacy of the world, and the vanity of all earthly things; while, at the same time, he has given me to see the charms of religion and the beauty of holiness. All on earth is changing, passing, transitory; nothing is unchanging but Christ, nothing abiding but religion, nothing true but heaven. The world shall fade away, time grow old with years, and all terrestrial glory shall cease; but religion, and Christ, and heaven, are one, and shall remain for ever.

“While endless ages are onward rolling,
This heavenly portion mine shall be.”

GRACE OF GOD — SAVING FAITH.

September 28. — Through grace, God hath raised us up from “the horrible pit,” from “the miry clay,” and placed our feet upon the Rock of Ages — upon the broad platform of redeeming mercy in Christ. What wondrous grace is this! Though by nature I was “poor, and miserable, and blind, and naked,” lost and ruined by the fall, yet through the riches of grace, Christ hath justified and adopted me, washed and cleansed, sanctified and consecrated us unto himself by his atoning blood, which is able “to purge from dead works to serve the living God,” and also “to cleanse from all unrighteousness.” Thanks be unto God, for his boundless grace!

It is said that “the cable is of greatest use to a ship in a storm, the shield in battle, and faith in time of suffering.” Until his faith failed him, Peter walked fearlessly upon the waters; it, alone, kept Jonah in the depths of the sea; and the true Christian can say, though the waves and the billows go over me, “I will trust in the Lord Jehovah, I will trust and not be afraid.” What a potent weapon is faith in the hands of the faithful Christian! “And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our *faith*.” Look at that cloud of witnesses mentioned in the 11th of Hebrews, and say, as God’s dear children, if we should not have faith — living, active, saving faith — faith always. “Lord, increase our faith” evermore!

I. N. K.

URBANA, *June 1849.*

RELIGION is a most cheerful and happy thing to practise, but a most sad and melancholy thing to neglect. The government of God in the soul, is a thing which regulates, but does not enslave.

From the Scottish Guardian.

HEAVEN.

That clime is not like this dull clime of ours ;
All, all is brightness there ;
A sweeter influence breathes around its flowers,
And a far milder air.
No calm below is like that calm above,
No region here is like that realm of love ;
Earth's softest spring ne'er shed so soft a light ;
Earth's brightest summer never shone so bright.

That sky is not like this sad sky of ours,
Tinged with earth's change and care ;
No shadow dims it, and no rain-cloud lowers,
No broken sunshine there !
One everlasting stretch of azure pours
Its stainless splendour o'er those sinless shores ;
For there Jehovah shines with heavenly ray,
There Jesus reigns, dispensing endless day.

Those dwellers there are not like those of earth,
No mortal stain they bear ;
And yet they seem of kindred blood and birth :
Whence and how came they there ?
Earth was their native soil ; from sin and shame,
Through tribulation, they to glory came ;
Bond slaves, delivered from sin's crushing load,
Brands plucked from burning, by the hand of God.

Those robes of theirs are not like those below ;
No angel's half so bright !
Whence came that beauty, whence that living glow,
Whence came that radiant white ?
Wash'd in the blood of the atoning Lamb,
Fair as the light, those robes of theirs became ;
And now, all tears wiped off from every eye,
They wander where the freshest pastures lie,
Through all the nightless day of that unfading sky.